

25 March 1978

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Visit to the Defense Attache Support Group of DIA

1. In thinking about the Defense Attache System, it is important to remember that they have four missions: (1) they are the military advisor to the Ambassador; (2) they have representation functions; (3) they may administer part of a security assistance program; and (4) they have responsibility for reporting on military matters. They regard all of these functions as important, but the multiplicity of functions obviously, make it hard for us to get a hold of them.

2. The system is now substantially smaller than it was in the early 1960s. There was a major consolidation in 1965 when the Defense Attache System was established to organize the decentralized service systems. During the balance of payments reduction exercise in 1968-1969, the size of the missions in total dropped from about 1600 to 1000. It then grew slightly with the absorption of some missions that had been held out by the Services.

3. Attache tasking is handled by the ordinary ~~DDO~~/DIA tasking mechanisms. It is important to remember that order-of-battle information is solely the DIA responsibility. Sometimes, the tasking can go directly from Unified and Specified Commands to attaches.

4. Personnel selection has, in the view of the folks there, improved substantially in the past few years. The Air Force, in particular, chooses its attaches very carefully and puts prospective attaches and their wives through a lengthy and rather searching interview. Most of the attaches have been to their service schools or one of the national schools and have graduate training. In preparation for their service as an attache, they get a year to 18 months of language and substantive training. Within the Army and the Air Force, there are also some foreign area specialists, who can expect to spend a substantial part of their career in training and work on a particular geographic area.

5. They feel that relations between attaches and DDO staffs are now typically quite close. There have been times of friction, but they have no complaints at the moment.

6. Distribution of attache reports in Washington is as follows: from the attache system to CIA, the distribution is complete; from CIA to the attache system, those reports of military interest are completely sampled.

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7. In terms of miscellaneous problems, they are effected by the devaluation of the dollar and have had to adjust some. However, since they furnish quarters allowances for the attaches, it does not appear likely that there are substantial personal hardships being suffered.



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